

Message Text

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10

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-03

INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 SP-03

CIEP-03 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 L-03 DODE-00 DOTE-00

FMC-04 CG-00 COA-02 DLOS-07 SWF-02 DRC-01 /113 W

----- 089086

R 160447Z AUG 74

FM AMCONSUL SYDNEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

UNCLAS SYDNEY 1734

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, BEXP, ETRD, PFOR, AS

SUBJ: PORT CONGESTION SURCHARGE: REMARKS OF MINISTER OF PUBLIC
WORKS

REF: SYDNEY 1642 AND PREVIOUS

ON AUGUST 12, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF SYDNEY'S NEW
ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF WHARF, NEW SOUTH WALES MINISTER FOR
PUBLIC WORKS, LEON PUNCH, DECRIED THE TREND TOWARD
SURCHARGES ON THE PORT OF SYDNEY WHICH "PLACES SYDNEY
AT AN UNDESERVED DISADVANTAGE AGAINST OTHER AUSTRALIAN PORTS."

PUNCH CATEGORIZED THE SURCHARGES AS SIMPLE FREIGHT
INCREASES AND, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT FREIGHT RATES
WERE NOT HIS DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY, STATED THAT "IF THE
COMPANIES WANT TO PUT UP THEIR FREIGHT RATES TO MEET
ANY EXTRA COSTS INVOLVED, THEN PUT THEM UP - IF THEY
CAN BE JUSTIFIED - BUT DON'T DISCRIMINATE UNFAIRLY
AGAINST THIS PORT IN A MANNER WHICH CAN ONLY BE
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INJURIOUS TO THE PEOPLE OF NSW." PUNCH FURTHER

STATED THAT WHILE A SURCHARGE COULD HAVE BEEN WARRANTED IN APRIL OR MAY IT COULD NOT BE FULLY JUSTIFIED NOW.

SHIPPING SOURCES GENERALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE CONGESTION SITUATION IN SYDNEY HAS IMPROVED IN RECENT MONTHS. THE NEW ROLL-ROLL BERTH AT SYDNEY'S DARLING HARBOR SHOULD FURTHER AID CONDITIONS. PUNCH HIMSELF DESERVES SOME CREDIT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT FOR IT WAS HE WHO SET UP THE CARGO MOVEMENT COORDINATION COMMITTEE WHICH BROUGHT THE MARITIME SERVICE BOARD UNDER HIS DIRECT CONTROL TO SPEED UP TURN-AROUND TIMES. FOR EXAMPLE, SYDNEY CTI REP MIKE DAVIS SEES THE CONTAINER CONGESTION PROBLEM CONSIDERABLY EASED, WITH MAIN DELAYS NOW FALLING ON CONVENTIONAL CARGOES.

NEGOTIATIONS IN SYDNEY ARE CURRENTLY UNDER WAY BETWEEN EAST COAST, GULF, NEW ZEALAND AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE AND AUSTRALIAN SHIPPERS COUNCIL FOR NEW TARIFF SCHEDULE. WE UNDERSTAND CONFERENCE SEEKS INCREASES OF 40-45 PERCENT AND FROM FLEXIBILITY VIEWPOINT CONFERENCE WOULD PREFER TO MAINTAIN SURCHARGE AS SEPARATE ITEM, RATHER THAN BUILDING THIS ITEM INTO TARIFF.

POST WILL CONTINUE TO REPORT ON DEVELOPMENTS.
HANNAH

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